

# WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,  
and workers in the District of Columbia*

*Friday, February 20, 2004*

## MAYOR AND CHIEF PRESENT DRAFT SECURITY PLAN FOR BALLOU SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

DC Mayor Anthony A. Williams and MPDC Chief Ramsey this week released a draft plan for enhancing security at Ballou Senior High School in Southeast, in the wake of recent violence at the school. Mayor Williams and Chief Ramsey expect recommendations on the draft plan from the City Council, the School Board and interim District of Columbia Public Schools Superintendent Elfreda Massie. The plan includes a number of recommendations for increasing staffing and physical security at the school, where 17-year-old student-athlete James Richardson was shot to death on February 2. The suspect in that shooting, 18-year-old Thomas Boykin, a fellow Ballou student, has been arrested and appeared in court this week for a preliminary hearing. Among other things, the plan recommends increasing the number of both uniformed police officers and contract security personnel at the school, and it calls for an MPDC sergeant to supervise all safety personnel. The plan also recommends improvement in entry/exit door security and more effective use of closed circuit television within the building. Finally, the plan recommends a number of changes in school policies—including issuance of identification tags and parking lot and lunchroom control—that would enhance safety. Mayor Williams emphasized that the draft security plan relies on cooperation from DCPS, the Council and the community. And, going forward, implementing the plan requires cooperation from all parties to ensure that the students and the Ballou community have a safe learning environment in which they can thrive, the Mayor said.

① Read the news release announcing the plan at:  
<http://www.mpdcc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2578>

① A copy of the draft Ballou Senior High School Safety Plan is available (in PDF) at:  
[http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/MPD\\_Ballou\\_safetyplan.pdf](http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/MPD_Ballou_safetyplan.pdf)

① For more information on school safety issues and resources, click on:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/schoolsafetylinks.shtml>

## REGIONAL ARSON TASK FORCE RELEASES UPDATED SKETCH OF POSSIBLE SUSPECT, INCREASES REWARD TO \$35,000

The multi-agency task force investigating a series of arson fires in the DC region this week issued an updated sketch of the individual thought to be responsible for these crimes. He is described as a black male, age 35-50, 6 feet tall, with a medium build, light-brown complexion, and salt-and-pepper (possibly gray) cropped back hair. He may be described as having a “chameleon personality.” When he needs to, he can act charming, and appear caring and genuine. Yet when he is stressed or angered, he may reveal a more callous, uncaring and angry side of his nature. This week, the Arson Task Force classified two recent fires as being similar in nature to those associated with the serial arsonist: a February 6 fire in Fairfax, Virginia, and a February 14 fire in Silver Spring, Maryland. To date, 35 arsons—including 18 in DC—have been identified as being similar in nature. The task force also reminds residents that the reward for information leading to an arrest and conviction in this serial arson case now stands at \$35,000.

① For updates on the arson investigation—including the updated suspect sketch—visit the Prince George's County Fire Department at:  
<http://www.goprincegeorgescounty.com/Government/PublicSafety/Fire/index.asp?h=20&s=&n=150>

① The Task Force has established several ways for residents to report tips, including a telephone number (301-77-ARSON), a mailing address (PO Box 211, Bladensburg, MD, 20710), and an e-mail address ([7arson@co.pg.md.us](mailto:7arson@co.pg.md.us)).

## GOOD SAMARITANS HELP POLICE IN SEPARATE ROBBERY INCIDENTS

Chief Ramsey this week is heralding citizens who helped police in two separate robbery incidents in different parts of the city. On February 18, a lone male on a bicycle rode up to a 62-year-old woman walking in the 2700 block of Q Street, NW. When the subject attempted to snatch the woman's purse, she resisted and a struggle ensued. Citizens in the area observed the situation and immediately came to the woman's aid. The suspect, a 28-year-old Rockville (MD) man, was subdued by the citizens and then arrested by responding police. A day earlier, a 31-year-old ice cream delivery truck driver was stabbed multiple times during a robbery in the rear of the 1800 block of Benning Road, NE. Citizens in the area came to the aid of the driver, who was taken to an area hospital and admitted. Using information provided by witnesses, the MPDC arrested a 40-year-old DC man on charges of armed robbery. While the MPDC commends the actions of the citizens in these cases, the Department does remind residents to exercise good judgment in responding to any criminal situations and to not put themselves in harm's way. Residents are always encouraged to be vigilant and to immediately report criminal activity in progress to 9-1-1.

- ① For more information on these two incidents, visit the MPDC News Room:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.shtm>
- ① For tips on how to avoid the chances of becoming a victim of robbery or assault, click on:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/street/robbassault.shtm>

## SPOTLIGHT ON...THE EVIDENCE CONTROL BRANCH AND HOW TO RECOVER YOUR PROPERTY

Every year, the MPDC handles more than 100,000 cases in which property is recovered or seized. The Department's Evidence Control Branch approaches this task with two goals in mind: 1) to secure, catalog and store property in a safe manner, and 2) to return all property to its rightful owners, as quickly and efficiently as possible. The MPDC recovers property under many different circumstances, including the recovery of items taken in burglaries. Once officers obtain possession of the property, they are required to classify and record it on a Property Record form and log the item in a property tracking system. Except for impounded vehicles and the property of prisoners, all property is then transferred to Evidence Control, where it is held until final disposition. If you or someone you know has property that has been taken into custody by the MPDC, the Department first of all urges patience. Oftentimes, the decision to release property must be made by the courts, with a signed release from the prosecuting attorney. In some instances, a case must be fully adjudicated before property can be released. While the process can be time-consuming, please be assured that the MPDC will make every effort to return your property as quickly as possible, and to safeguard your valuables while they are in our custody.

- ① Individuals with questions or concerns about the evidence control process can call the Evidence Control Branch at (202) 645-0130 or visit:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/units/ecb.shtm>

## NEWS & NOTES

**January Court Reports Available.** Each month, members of the US Attorney's Office Community Prosecution Team publish a prosecution update for the police district to which they're assigned. These "court reports" provide general summary information about recent court cases. View the January 2004 reports at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/courtrpts/courtrpts.shtm>

**Chief on WOL's "Live at Five."** Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls during his monthly appearance on "Live at Five" on WOL radio (1450 AM), on Wednesday, February 25, from 5-6 pm.

**PSA Restructuring Hearing.** DC Council Judiciary Committee Chair Kathy Patterson has scheduled a hearing on the MPDC's Police Service Area (PSA) Restructuring plan for Tuesday, February 24, at 10 am in Room 412 of the Wilson Building. The plan, which reduces the number of PSAs from 83 to 43, is designed to improve police services in DC neighborhoods and enhance public involvement in community policing. For more information, including maps of the proposed PSAs and police districts, visit [http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/PSAs\\_proposed.shtm](http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/PSAs_proposed.shtm)

### DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 2/20/04)

- 2004: 27
- 2003: 26
- % Change: +3.8%
- Closure Rate: 70.4% (19 closures)

Adult Arrests (week end. 2/14/04)

- Total: 895
- Drugs: 169
- Homicide: 2
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 13
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 50

Firearm Recoveries (as of 2/17/04)

- February: 120
- 2004 Total: 320

Traffic Fatalities (as of 2/20/04)

- 2004: 6
- 2003: 4
- % Change: 50.0%

**Information, ideas, or comments about this service?** Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at [kevin.morison@dc.gov](mailto:kevin.morison@dc.gov). Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

**mpdc.dc.gov**